

Interview with Lindsey R. Halverson and
Maude Halverson Clodfelter
Conducted by Dr. James L. Dodson and
Miss Catherine Ann McNeil

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TAPE #1

DODSON: You can start with you people giving your full names for the tape and telling us how long you've lived in the valley.

HALVERSON: My name is Lindsey Halverson and I was born in Van Nuys in 1915.

CLODFELTER: My name is Mark Clodfelter. I originally came from Portland, Oregon in 1920 to Van Nuys in 1923. That's about it.

MAUDE: My name is Maude Halverson Clodfelter and I came with my parents to Van Nuys in 1911 from Louisiana and at that time I was about four years old. At the present time I live in the Simi Valley. I had all my schooling in the Van Nuys schools and lived here until about six years ago when we moved to Simi Valley and retired.

DODSON: You went to school in the old Van Nuys Elementary School, did you not?

MAUDE: Yes I did.

DODSON: That's the one that had the dome on the top?

MAUDE: The one that had the dome and the columns in the front. There was a high set of steps that went in the front. It was a very beautiful building. In fact, somewhere in our pictures we have a picture that shows my father, Mr. Halverson, Ben, he always went by Ben Halverson, on the proof. He built the elementary school.

DODSON: I'm rather interested in that dome. Was there a lobby underneath that or just columns inside of the building arranged?

MAUDE: I think it was just like an attic. I don't believe, that as far as I can recall, I personally never was up in the dome...I think it was just a decoration.

CATHY: Who went to the elementary school? Was it the local school kids. All the kids in the east valley or was it just Van Nuys, North Hollywood?

MAUDE: I believe it was just Van Nuys section. Because there was a North Hollywood school, I'm sure, at the time that this school was built.

CATHY: I see. The reason why I ask is because of its size. It seems like an extremely huge building.

MAUDE: It was a large building and it had an auditorium. I good sized auditorium and it also had a basement. The school basement, wasn't it? I remember the basement quite well. I remember the steps inside were all cement and painted.

DODSON: Well, actually you had things in that elementary school we don't have in the modern elementary schools then. With such as an auditorium, I think very few were probably have that.

MAUDE: That's true, we did. It was a lovely school. And as I think back, I think our school was excellent, I would say. Because we did have the auditorium and in elementary school we were taught...the girls at least were taught cooking and so besides all of the arithmetic and spelling and all of those things which the curriculum emphasized most but we had the extra things and the boys had shop.

HALVERSON: Boys had woodworking. Agriculture.

MAUDE: Didn't they have some metal working. They had agriculture. All of us had agriculture.

HALVERSON: Girls and boys.

MAUDE: Yes, we had we little plots that we planted gardens and flowers in the back. There was a complete...this school was built on a complete block. The school district, I believe at that time, owned it all, if not at the time it was built. At least it covered that. And all of the 8th grades were housed in the school. And at the beginning I'm not sure about the high school. But when they built the high school, this I know was some time after this school was built, then they finally had from the 7th grade go over to the high school. So that by the time I was in the 7th grade we went to the Van Nuys High School on the other side of town.

CATHY: About how many children went to the elementary school and what was ??

MAUDE: I don't think I would know that off hand. It might be in some of the ? that I haven't had to really study.

DODSON: The high school was in the same place the present high school is now.

MAUDE: Yes, but that is a new building.

DODSON: I understand that the Long Beach earthquake damaged both the elementary school and the high school?

MAUDE: Yes, they have both been torn down.

DODSON: I was a teacher in 1983 ?? Go right ahead I'd be glad to hear about it. At what time of the day did that earthquake hit.

HALVERSON: I'd forgotten the date of the earthquake. But as I recall it was either late '32 or early 1933. And it happened at approximately six o'clock in the evening.

DODSON: So there was no one in the school at the time.

HALVERSON: And to my knowledge there was no injury to anyone at the school. As a matter of fact, I don't think anyone was there. I remember the time very well because I was taking a bath when it happened prior to going out on a date that evening so it sticks in my mind very well.

DODSON: I can imagine what a conjunction of circumstances would be met.

HALVERSON: Immediately after the earthquake there were still classes held in the main building, which was the original building and the one that suffered the most damage at the earthquake. You were able to actually walk down the hall and see daylight through cracks in the walls to outside but in a very short time they just closed down the whole building. As I recall they held classes in the lower floors for a short time but immediately we were unable to use the auditorium which was extensively damaged.

DODSON: Do you recall how much damage there was to the auditorium. I've been rather surprised that to hear that the organ apparently wasn't damaged although it was in the auditorium or was it in the auditorium?

HALVERSON: Yes, it was. As a matter of fact, my sister Maude played that very organ and...

MAUDE: I took lessons on that organ at least a semester or for a year.

DODSON: Then you might be interested in knowing if you didn't know that, that organ is to be rededicated on June 4th of this year.

MAUDE: I did see that in the Van Nuys paper last week I believe.

DODSON: You probably want to be there then and do it.

MAUDE: I certainly hope I well.

HALVERSON: It might be of interest that our graduating class because of the damage to the auditorium was unable to hold our graduation there obviously. We therefore held it at the Van Nuys Christian Church which is just a block away from the high school and our whole class was able to be on the stage or on the front of the church. There were 113 of us and at that time it was largest class they had ever had. It's gotten quite a little larger than that I think since.

DODSON: That was 1933.

HALVERSON: It was 1933 Summer class. That's correct. June 30th. At first the class felt rather despondent because they couldn't have the traditional Van Nuys graduation in the auditorium. However, it was handled so well that it became almost a point of pride that we were able to have such a beautiful

graduation and yet not have it in the school. It was a good experience.

DODSON: Was the school ever used again after that? Or was it promptly torn down?

HALVERSON: To my knowledge, and if you remember better than I, because as I graduated then I of course was away. But to my knowledge it was close to a year before it was actually destroyed. However, it wasn't used. The classes had to be doubled up in the other buildings and double sessions and so forth in order to accommodate the students with this immediate unavailability of the main building, which was a large building.

DODSON: Is there any building there now to your knowledge that was there at the time that you were a student?

HALVERSON: It's been a few years since I've been at Van Nuys High School but I think there are two buildings still in operation or were the last time I was there. My sons also graduated there and of course I spent quite a bit of time then and those would be what we call the home building and the shop building. The home building running along parallel to Kittridge Street and the shop building along

Hamlin Avenue and they built I think about the same time approximately 1922 or 23 because I visited high school with you.

MAUDE: Oh yes, that's right.

HALVERSON: I don't know whether it was due to illness in the family or not but I went to high school with my sister. For some reason babysitters weren't common in those days and it was necessary for someone to take care of me and to my recollection my age I would have been about 22 or 23 and I remember going in that building because my sister had a sewing class at that time.

MAUDE: I had a sewing class.

DODSON: The home building was used for Home Economics was it? Well, that's interesting because no one has told that any of the original buildings might still be there.

HALVERSON: We'd like to go look and see if they are. But they were the last time that I drove by there.

MAUDE: I think it was right behind, what is now the auditorium. I think the auditorium at the high

school is right on the corner of Kittridge...no Cedros. And this would be right behind that. And that is I'm quite sure the same building. It might be that there were earthquakes after at and we've lost track of it but I believe they were still there. One of the buildings that I can recall to that we used for a gymnasium building was on the next street over and behind.

HALVERSON: Hamlin.

MAUDE: On Hamlin. Now whether that building is still there, I have no idea.

HALVERSON: That old gymnasium building is gone. It was actually just really not large enough. I can't recall what year but I remember them rebuilding it when I went to high school. They took the building clear down and built a new gymnasium and boys and girls...places for boys and girls gym separate on each side of the present gymnasium. It was a nice building. I remember when they built it how proud everyone was then. A beautiful building.

DODSON: Do you recall any of your high school teachers? Their names and what sort of courses you studied, either of you?

Oh yes. I probably ~~could~~ be first because I was there first. I remember that one of the teachers after high school was Elma Snyder. She had been my teacher at the elementary school. 6th grade I believe and then when I went over to the high school building when I was...when I became a 7th grader, then we went to the high school building. Miss Snyder was then teaching Spanish and Latin. I had Spanish in the 7th and 8th grade Spanish. In the 9th grade I remember having Latin, one year of Latin only. Then I continued with my Spanish under a different teacher. My Spanish teacher then was ?? I also remember, let's see, I'll have to think for a minute. ? was the music teacher. Miss Hubbard also taught Spanish and was the, it's not right at the beginning of my year ?? she was the Vice Principal of the school. Mr. English was the Principal later but when I first went over, I can't think of his name, Smith...he remembers names better than I do. I have all of these high school annuals for all the years that I was there, plus many after that. My son also went to that high school and graduated from there just in time to go in '48...

DODSON: In the Armed Forces?

MAUDE: Armed Forces, yes, he was in the navy.

DODSON: Did you feel that the subjects he studied were much different from the ones that you studied that there had been much change?

MAUDE: I don't believe there had been too much change of the methods of teaching at the time he was at the high school. I think it changed more from then until our younger children were in high school. There was a great deal of change in the subjects they taught and how they went about it I think. I don't know how specific I can be but it did seem to me... Do you think that when Bob was in high school they taught him just about the same as they did...?

DODSON: I wondered if there were more subjects put into the curriculum. That is, more different kinds of things they could choose from. Although from what you told me about the elementary school, it seemed to me that you had a very broad curriculum there and quite a bit of choice. Probably more then they would have now it would seem to be.

HALVERSON: My opinion and I have three sons who also graduated from Van Nuys High School. One of them back in 1957 and then the other two in 1964 approximately and I'm quite certain I had more opportunities for varied education than they did. For example, I took a

class when I when in the B-12 in Home Economics which I think for boys would be unheard of nowadays. At that time it was a marvelous class. And a woman teacher but only boys in the class. She not only taught us how to cook but she taught us how to be courteous. How to treat a girl on a date. She even taught some sex, which was not talked about. In other words, she didn't say, "Now, you mustn't repeat to your parents what I taught you," but somehow the feeling was there that this is just between this group. She taught us...she was a marvelous teacher. I can't remember her name, unfortunately and I should because I also knew one of her sons but I cannot say her name at this moment. But she was a marvelous teacher and I think she had an impact on every boy that ever took her class. That is, she taught him things that he would remember. Important things for life. Plus that we had all types of shops and perhaps they still do. But there was automobile shop; electric shop; mechanical drawing; wood shop; pin shop we called it, which is sheet metal working. In addition to that, there was agricultural specialties. It happened that I didn't take any of those in high school so I'm not sure of how many classes were actually available but there was a vast, far more varied program I'd say then I'm sure. And we were

given quite a bit of latitude as to what courses we would take. In other words, I can remember very well, that when I went into the 10th grade I had to decide whether I wanted to take algebra or general arithmetic. That wasn't exactly the name of it but one was a pre-college course and the other wasn't. And you could take your choice and perhaps that still happens, I don't know. But we were required to take some type of mathematics and english but if you were college oriented you took a little different approach to it.

DODSON: Would say that most students thought they would go to college or were they in the minority? Which curriculum did most students take in your opinion?

HALVERSON: Well, in my opinion I would say that probably the most took the generally education program, that the minority were those who crammed for college. Those who took the college course were generally the better students and I have to say that most of them never really thought they would get to college because it was just almost economically impossible to go to college unless your family was wealthy enough to send you. Because there were not any colleges closer than...well, USC in L.A. UCLA was hardly off the ground, you had to go to Berkeley if

you wanted to go to the University of California and there were no junior colleges. There was a couple of other private colleges perhaps. If you had wealthy parents and good grades. You had to have a B+ average to even talk about going to college plus money. And very, very few people had both requisites.

DODSON: There weren't as many aid programs and scholarships and all that as there are now.

HALVERSON: To my knowledge there was almost none. I did know of some but they again were mostly used by the people who were really A students, who were really college material of the top score were able to get some financial aid. There was not enough for everyone. I don't mean that. But the scholarships were aimed at those people who really excelled as students. They were the ones who should be.

MAUDE: It might be interesting to know that between the time that I was in high school and Pat was in high school, I on the other hand did think that I would go to college. And I did take college preparatory courses and my grades were not all A's and I never found out whether I could get to college but at that time my father was really quite successful and he

had thought that he could afford to send me to college. And I didn't get my application in time, had probably go to...isn't that awful. ?? so much music. I couldn't remember, they had too much base...

CATHY: Claremont.

MAUDE: Yes. And they didn't call it Claremont.

HALVERSON: Pomona College.

MAUDE: Pomona College, yes. And I didn't begin my planning early enough and but then I wanted to go to Pomona College because they were considered the best in the music field. I had hopes to do tapes. But by the time I got my application in, they had taken all the freshman women that they would take for that year. So I didn't go to college but during the time then after I graduated, that was in 1944...during that summer our neighbors were going on ? into Los Angeles to business college. So they talked very...they were very excited about it and liked it very much. I thought that would be a wonderful thing to do while I was waiting for my application to be filled. The next year perhaps I could go to Pomona College. I would go to business college

which I did. But in thinking of the curriculum of the high school I did take all of the college preparatory classes. I took music appreciation and ? I was taking piano lessons. I was the accompanist for the Boys Glee Club in my senior year. I was the song leader for the high school football games.

CATHY: Did you ever find yourself in a different click say then the kids who weren't in college preparatory classes? I mean did people look at you differently then?

MAUDE: I don't remember. I don't think so. I was in the click group, if you know what I mean. I was at least a year younger than most of them because I had to go a girls' kindergarten and I had gotten into 1st grade before I was six years old. And I was only in there a half of year and then they put my up into the 2nd grade so I was like from a year to a year and a half younger than the average so I wasn't in the group. I had lots of fun and lots of friends but they were not the group kind. They sort of...I was so busy with the things I was interested in that it never bothered me one way or the other whether were taking a college course or not.

CATHY: Did they have social clubs in the high school then?
Do you know what I mean by a social club?

MAUDE: Yes, they had the Art Club and the Latin Club and
the Spanish Club and quite a few of those latin
kind.

CATHY: Did they have any sorority or fraternity type class
in the high school then?

MAUDE: No.

CATHY: No, okay. The reason why I ask is because that is
something that came up several years ago in the high
schools and I know when I went to high school it was
that way. You had fraternities and sororities in
the high school.

MAUDE: No, you didn't have any then.

CATHY: What about school rivalry? When you went to high
school I think maybe there it was different from
when Pat went...but maybe it was the same.

HALVERSON: Partially.

MAUDE: Yes, partly the same. There was quite a bit of rivalry, especially for the football game. I don't recall whether there was much on any of the other sports, but the football games we actually did go...for instance to San Fernando and to Lancaster. And to Canoga Park, I believe, to North Hollywood and Burbank and there was great rivalry, especially between Van Nuys High School and San Fernando High School.

CATHY: San Fernando? Well, I would think it would be Van Nuys and North Hollywood.

MAUDE: Not so much. No, that never bothered us, but the San Fernando High School was our arch enemy.

CATHY: Well, what all would happen at the football games? Would there be mascot swapping and soap on windshields and things like that?

DODSON: I think Cathy is asking how much devilment you got into in those days.

MAUDE: No, I don't remember that. I remember feeling very nervous when I went to the San Fernando High School. Although nothing ever happened to me. I think it was all just verbal, perhaps. A great deal of

school spirit and occasionally perhaps a fist fight or two. But not in my group. ? boys.

DODSON: Since Cathy has brought that up, I'd like to ask about such questions as vandalism in the school? Something we suffer from a great deal at the present time. Was that common when you were in school?

MAUDE: Not as I recall. I can't remember so much vandalism.

DODSON: As your probably aware from the papers, we just have constant cases of it. Setting schools on fire. Turning on fire hoses. Stealing things and messy up food in the cafeteria, just constant.

MAUDE: I just don't remember those things in my school days. I really don't. I remember a few people who might get in trouble over small things but not to the extent that it is now. Never do I recall anything.

HALVERSON: I do recall a very few accidents at school which was the punishment was so bad that there was very little of this done. A matter of fact, we know very well a boy sitting on the curb across the street from the high school smoking a cigarette, he got expelled and

never went back to school. They were very, very tough and what we would call vandalism now, there was really nothing like that. Nothing destructive. I think the worse thing anybody ever did was write their name on the wall in the restroom and if they were caught at it, this could cost you a week's suspension from high school I think. I believe it would have been that bad or at least you would have thought that would have been the punishment. And there was very, very little, if any vandalism as we know today.

DODSON: How was the conduct in the classroom? Was order kept pretty strictly or not?

HALVERSON: In all of my classes I think by any standard they were excellent. People were there to learn and the teacher made it known they were there to learn and there was not much foolishness put up with, very, very little, if any. It was mostly business. There was no talking back to teachers and no making fun of them or no wandering in and out of class or away from the school grounds. By the way, you could be expelled from school for going off the school ground during school hours, including lunch. Unless you had a special permit to go home or lunch which did happen and some people who lived close by. School

was all business. That is, during classroom time. We had lots of fun. We had lots of school spirit. At football games the minority were those who didn't go. And it was interesting that you asked about any trouble. There was really never any trouble except as Maude said, an occasional fist fight maybe, but that would even be an exception to the rule. Mostly it was who could holler the loudest on their side of the field and that type of thing. And who could wave their flags the hardest or sing the loudest. In those days we sang school songs, which I could and I'm sure Maude could too, because she use to be the song leader. I mean they were tremendous things to watch at that time. I know they were for me and I'm sure they were to you. School was fun but it was business. I mean it was...there was no horsing around or feeling like you were unwanted because every student was there for business. That's my memory of it.

DODSON: Did you feel that there was any difference with your own sons?

HALVERSON: Oh, a tremendous difference. Between the time I went to Van Nuys High School and the time they did I couldn't believe the difference actually. My boys I think they wandered on and off the campus at will

frankly. I don't know what way that had of covering themselves up but I don't mind saying that everybody...I mean it seemed more like a railway station with people coming and going rather than people in the class.

MAUDE: No real discipline.

HALVERSON: There was no discipline at all for kids, with any of them for that matter, as far as I could see. And this young lady mentioned school fraternities. By the time our oldest son got to school that was just becoming a big thing.

CATHY: Back what year was that?

HALVERSON: I think Dick graduated in 1957. So he went to Van Nuys High School in approximately '54 and the big in thing then if you were one of the class or the click around school was to be in one of these school fraternities. I don't anything about the sororities but there were lots of...at that time perhaps 4 or 5 that I could remember.

DODSON: Now, you were telling Mr. Halverson about the unofficial fraternities that existed in high school.

HALVERSON: That's correct. And a matter of fact, my son came to me and wanted to join one of them. It was my feeling that they were not legal. So I made it my business to talk to the boy's Vice Principal of Van Nuys High School as well as the football coach. And both of them assured me that as long as the school was not involved in sponsoring this club, there was no worry. The main reason my son wanted to belong to this particular fraternity which was named the Jesters, by the way, was that I think without exception every member of the football team, that is the varsity team belonged to that fraternity. And if you didn't you just couldn't get on the team. Now this was not the coach's doing, this was the boys themselves doing. Because they would just make it untenable for you to be on that team if you weren't one of their group. This fraternity was quite new at that time but that's how he got involved with it and because of their wild activities which as a parent it took me a while to find out just how much beer they could drink and so forth. Because they were a wild bunch when they got alone. Believe me, I know now and I didn't know then. So that when my younger sons were 7 years, 6 years younger went to Van Nuys High School and one fast rule I had is that you will not belong to any club that is not school sponsored.

DODSON: Did this first ? prestige with other students, did they feel left out then?

HALVERSON: If they were not a member of the fraternity, of one of the fraternities by the time I came to go to high school and yes, very definitely you were just not one of the in group. You were just socially unacceptable for football or any of the sports or for I think just a general feeling of who's the big shots of any school.

CATHY: How did your sons cope with that?

HALVERSON: Well as a matter of fact, they coped with it by joining a fraternity against our knowledge and will. And it took us two years to find that out. That's why my wife and I get steamed up when you talk about the fraternities because by that time they were definitely then illegal at the schools. But they were flourishing anyway. Were for law and order. It was an illegal thing and it was very depressing to us to find that they had without our...against our will and without our knowledge, gone ahead with that. But that was widespread in those days, the fraternities. They almost ran the school. At least from a social and athletic viewpoint. You better be one of the High Hats, the Jesters, I can't remember

the name of some of the others. And almost all the prominent people in school, the student body president on down and all of the big athletes in almost any sport belonged to one of those groups.

DODSON: Cathy, you went to high school here in the valley, didn't you? What is the situation when you were in high school, which would be very recently?

CATHY: It would be the same way that we have. That's why I brought it up. We have fraternities, sororities and it's much the same. The people who are on the football teams; the basketball teams; the baseball teams, they all have their own fraternities; their own sororities. And the girls who are the socialites of the campus are in their own sororities. And there is of course one sorority that is the best on the campus and the others go down and then if you aren't in one at all then you're just really out of it.

MAUDE: Maybe they had them when I was at school and I didn't know about it. Because they were definitely a group who were the socialites and I was just never a part of them.

CATHY: No, it would have been fairly apparent because we had hazing on campus and laugh bawling and everybody knew about it. If you went into high school and you knew nothing about the social clubs on campus and we call them social clubs instead of sororities or fraternities and if knew nothing about them then by the time, after the first three months of school you knew all about them because you saw the girls being hazed and you saw the guys being hazed and you heard about the parties and you saw your friends being invited to parties and maybe you were invited to some parties too but it was just the big social order thing and I was never in it.

DODSON: Did this make you and other girls feel sort of left out or inferior to the others? Did it have a psychological effect?

CATHY: It did on me. I felt very left out. I went to very few parties and I don't know. I was a loner to start out with so it was just...I didn't feel...I felt left out but I didn't feel that it was that big of a thing because that's the way I was to start with. And if people weren't in a sorority or fraternity they had their own little click. It was just like the whole school was made up of clicks. And generally speaking...one thing that was really

interesting to me was that the people who were in music, the band and all those people, they had like their own social group and they just stuck around with each other and they were never really in any of the social fraternities.

DODSON: For the record Cathy, what years were you in high school?

CATHY: I went to high school from '71 to '74 and I went to North Hollywood High School.

DODSON: Fine, thank you. Now we've gotten three generations so to speak. I wanted to take in regard to this. Can you tell us something about what sort of social life you led when you were in your teens, both of you? What was important?

MAUDE: You're talking to me since I'm the oldest. My social life...what social life I had outside of school events was oriented to the church. My family brought us to be church people and we were...and I was one of them. There was the farm group. I was there when they founded the church in Van Nuys. The Van Nuys Methodist Church my parents were charter members. I wasn't a member but I was with them. And the church was very much a part of your daily

life. All the way through. On Sunday you went to church and you didn't think about going anywhere else until after you went to church. You weren't so strict that you weren't allowed any other activities but there were always things going at church. There are social things. There are still that sort of activities going on and as I got to be a teenager then I was singing in the choirs and there were all the choir activities and then there were the young people activities in the evenings as well as the church meeting in the evening. I went to quite a bit of those and the other social affairs were part of the neighborhood and the family. There was a... there were motion pictures. There was a picture show. That's what we called it then as I was a little older and occasionally you went to that. I was not allowed to go to dances when I was a high school student or later until I became an adult when I could decide what I wanted to be so I was never really too much into that. But they did have school dances now that I remember. There were school dances that were held during our after school, not too much in the evening. There wasn't an organized youth activity that I could remember while I was in high school away from school or church. There were lots of social things that were in family oriented

but not actually anything planned by the whole community.

CATHY: Was it any different when you went to high school?

HALVERSON: I think that at the time that I went to high school it was almost identical to the eight or ten years previous when my sister went. Other than school activities, which as she said, consisted of after school dances were on. By the way, I played in the Jazz Orchestra then we made music for those dances. So I was there but it that capacity. Other than that, most of our social life did certainly revolve around the church and that was not only the case with her and I. Everyone belonged to some church I think almost and everyone's life revolved around their church. I don't remember very many exceptions to that really. It seemed like everyone is involved either in their ? League we called it. Or maybe they had a youth program called the Christian Endeavor had a lot of friends. Sometimes we visited back and forth on a Sunday night. But it was the heart of social life.

DODSON: Was the beach popular at that time?

HALVERSON: To our family it was very popular. Our family loved the beach. We went to the ocean a lot.

MAUDE: We went to the ocean whenever we had a chance and we still do. One of my best things that I like to do. Now my husband and I when we retired and I got ? to it is to go to the beach. If I do nothing then just stand and look at the water I love it. There are pictures here somewhere of a family on the beach. But we use to go after church on Sunday. My dad worked six days a week. It was a cement contractor. He did the cement a lot of the walks in Van Nuys. Most of the cement work was done in my dad's name's honor. But on Sunday he never worked and on Sunday as soon as church was out we would often, especially in the summertime, it seems most of the time we would have a big picnic basket and go to the beach. It takes about an hour or more than an hour.

DODSON: That's what I was going to ask you. Was it much of a problem to get to the beach at that time.

MAUDE: It was a tremendous problem. At first, when I was very small we went on the street car. In order to get to the beach you would take the street car in Van Nuys.

CATHY: Was this the red car now?

MAUDE: The red car. The red car in Van Nuys to Santa Monica Blvd. then you would transfer...or on Hollywood Blvd.?

HALVERSON: Well, it was Santa Monica Blvd. here in Hollywood.

MAUDE: In Hollywood, yes. And then you would transfer to another red car that went clear over to Santa Monica and down to Venice. And that's where you would get off in Venice. Now this obviously took quite a few hours and then you had to come back too. We must not have gone to church on those days. I don't think we went very often at that time.

HALVERSON: Our parents, or at least in my time, they may have been a little more strict than your time. But by the time I came along, they still went to church if your home on Sunday but they didn't feel that it was so sacrilegious for a family to go on an outing together. We somehow felt that, that was alright. But we were still...if you were home you went to church. It didn't hurt our conscious to say it's a hot day, let's go to the beach and we did.

CATHY: What about the red car coming to the valley? Could you tell us something about that? Do you remember?

MAUDE: Somewhere here ? Here was the period that was in 1911. Well I don't of course remember that day because at that time I was only about four or five years old but I do remember that there was always the red car. We use to go on it often, maybe not terribly often but as I got into high school age we did go. We almost had to go.

CATHY: Did you take it to high school, to the school?

MAUDE: No, no, not to school. No, we lived close enough. We always had to walk to school except that later when we began to have a car in the family. By that time we lived a mile or more from the school. As I remember my brother drove to school occasionally. And sometimes he let me ride with him, not always. But I did take the red car to go to the business college which was in Los Angeles.

CATHY: What about the fares on that car, was it the same when you started using it as the years went on or would they increase?

MAUDE: I don't remember how much they were, I really don't.
And I went every day.

CATHY: Did it seem like it was reasonable?

MAUDE: It seemed like it was reasonable. Yes, because I'm
sure by that time. We didn't have a great deal of
money and I don't remember then feeling that it was
too expensive for me to go on the car to business
college.

DODSON: Did you gradually cease to use the red cars as you
acquired an automobile of your own? Everyone is
sorry the red car has disappeared but I am curious
to know whether everybody just gradually ceased
riding on them and that's why they disappeared.

MAUDE: We ceased riding on it as soon as we were able to
drive our own cars. By that time that we could have
a car and could drive a car, I didn't have a car of
my own at any time and so of course I did ride to
get a car first to business college after high
school and then I worked in Los Angeles for a year
or two. And I did ride the red cars because at that
time very few young people had a car of their own.
You had to be tremendously wealthy for the son or
daughter in high school or school age to have a car

of their own or his own. Or even to drive to go to work if you worked in Los Angeles, which of course you had to work in Los Angeles if you were going to work because there weren't any jobs in Van Nuys at time.

CATHY: When was this?

MAUDE: This is 1924. I graduated in '24 and I went to business college during '25 and then I worked for about a year in Los Angeles. I had taken a secretarial course and found that I loved that and never wanted to go back to college because by that time I had met Mark here and I worked in Los Angeles for a year or so. And then I found work at the organ factory. At that time it had just started.

DODSON: You did work in the organ factory?

MAUDE: I worked in the organ factory my first job was as a receptionist at the...just inside the door I had my desk and there's a switchboard which they taught me to run and I answered the phone. Now that was really my second job. My first job I worked downtown at 9th and Hill in their manufacturing...where they manufactured women's clothing. And I was the bookkeeper there and I was

only sixteen, not quite seventeen and so I didn't last very many months. Then I found this job at the organ factory and I had that job for a year or two. I did work at the organ factory.

DODSON: Can you tell us about how many people were employed at the organ factory when you were there?

MAUDE: It seemed to me it must of been about a 100 to 150, I'm not really positive. I'm sure I could the records if I had thought of it. I could have found out how many there were. That is, I recall there were about 5 or 6 people who worked in the office and 2 or 3 would be in management and the rest of us just worked there. And quite a few actually manufactured the organs at this establishment.

DODSON: We have several pictures taken of the employees of the organ factory at different times so your picture may be in one of them. I don't know, do you recall ever having posed out in front of the building for a photographer?

MAUDE: Yes, I remember one where we all posed in front. I was trying to remember the occasion. I may be in one of those. I started there it would be about

1925 and I was married in '26 and I was still working there.

DODSON: Was in the 1930's that the organ factory then went out of business.

MAUDE: I think it was about early 1930's, yeah.

HALVERSON: Early '30's. It was one of the first things to go, close as I recall. In other words, the depression hadn't been in force very long. The depression really hit here in late '29. We felt it right away. I think that organ factory...I'll bet it closed about '30. It really didn't last long after because what was also happening, you see with the advent of sound movies they didn't need organs in theaters.

DODSON: I guess that was the final blow.

HALVERSON: That was the final blow. Really their main market was wiped out. Because they made a tremendous amount of work in the organs for the silent motion pictures.

DODSON: It's my understanding that the organ in the Van Nuys High School is a Morton organ.

HALVERSON: I believe it is. Maude, you would know.

MAUDE: I'm quite sure it is. I think it is. I'm quite positive it is.

HALVERSON: I feel that they donated it, but I don't know that. I might have just dreamed that one up. But I was definite that it was a Morton organ.

DODSON: I think we had discovered there was one other Morton organ at least still operating in the First Presbyterian Church in Glendale.

HALVERSON: Yes, I remember that.

DODSON: I think that we came across that somewhere.

MAUDE: Was the one in the Methodist Church? Have you any idea whether that was a Robert Morton organ or not?

HALVERSON: That I don't know.

MAUDE: It is a pipe organ and I recall when it was installed and that was donated by Dr. McCullough. Mr. McCullough wasn't it?

HALVERSON: Dr. McCullough...I think it was.

MAUDE: I think it was, if I remember right.

DODSON: Donating a pipe organ would have been a very substantial donation.

HALVERSON: Yes, it would.

MAUDE: That's right. It was a second hand though I believe it was second hand when it was installed. I'm not sure if it was a Robert Morton or not.

HALVERSON: I wouldn't know that. You should know that too, but you don't.

MAUDE: Well, you don't think of it often enough.

CATHY: Did you have any work to do with the organ factory or what were you doing?

HALVERSON: My recollection of the organ factory was just marvelous. And I'll you why, I as being younger than her, I was just a boy of perhaps 12 years old. In fact, from the time that I can remember until it closed which would have been about when I was 14, the organ factory used a lot of very nice wood. Mahogany and Pine, all clear, no knots in it. And in making these pipe organs the scraps of wood were

just beautiful nice rectangular pieces. Anywhere from a foot long to 6 feet long and anywhere in size from a 1/4" square to perhaps a 1/2" x 4". Beautiful wood. You could just build anything and every Saturday morning from 9:00 to 10:00 they opened their gates for people to just come and help themselves to that wood. It had no value as firewood, it was too light. But anybody that wanted to build anything which was most boys in town, you were at the organ factory when they opened that gate and I just have the fondest memories of bringing home...wagon full. We would be walking obviously and bringing home a wagon load of wood. We use to build all kinds of things and just sheer pleasure. I've loved wood every since. And woodworking is still my hobby.

DODSON: Well, that was a very pleasant gesture on their part to make that available to the public.

HALVERSON: Oh yes. They had a tremendous incinerator and the man would be waiting to burn it at 10:00 but he never started early and often you know if you'd be digging through...there would be an immense pile of this scrap. I say immense, perhaps 6 or 8 feet high and 20 feet in diameter of just beautiful scraps of wood. And if you were building something particular

you would be going through it trying to find just the right size piece for what would fit your little project. Whether you were building a kite or a small wagon or little railroad tracks for your toy railroad trains. You know it would lend itself to this. And often he would wait. You thought he was a meanie but he wasn't because he would just you know, he said "Well, it's 10:00. We got to get this thing...and everybody out of the way." Which there would be maybe 10 or 5 or 15 boys rummaging through this and he would wait. He was very nice. I always loved the Morton Organ Company just for that one thing. Other than my sister worked there but I didn't know anything of the internal working. Very fond memories of the Morton Organ Company.

CATHY: What about your vocational gain in high school. What did you plan on doing after you got out of high school?

HALVERSON: Well, I remember mine vividly because it was depression time when I went to high school. As a matter of fact when I went to Van Nuys High School in those days it was the 9th...no, it's still the 7th grade. 7th, 8th and so forth. So when 1929 I was in the middle...I was just starting to get into high school age and I think I just naturally felt

that I would follow in my father's business, which was cement contracting. However, I got a job working in a bakery in Van Nuys in 1929 and jobs became so scarce that almost that same time that I immediately decided I'll be a baker because this is where I was working. It wasn't by choice, it was the fact that I was there I did enjoy the work and as I say that was '29 and I'm still associated with the baking business in that I sell bakery supplies. And I have been associated with that industry ever since that time. In those days I don't remember but very few people who had a definite plan. In other words, by the time I got to high school it was what can you find anything to do in. It was not you know, "I'm going to be a brick layer," or "I'll go to college and I'll be a professor." There was just almost none of that. It was, "I got a job in a bakery." So alright, you'll be a baker. It's the better that was presented is what you grabbed.

DODSON: What was the effect of the depression on your family? Were that hard hit by it?

HALVERSON: Our family was very hard hit as my sister indicated. Our father was a very successful contractor in the valley and along with just about everyone, we became from affluent people to really paupers is not the

right word. But we became very, very poor. Not that we ever wanted for food but believe me it came close to that at times I know. And I'm sure you do too. They were young married people at that time so they know better than I but money was non-existent. A good example of how hard it not us as a family but my high school class as a group. For example, in '33 it was really going strong. The depression was here. I mean it was not just a rumor or it wasn't unfelt by most people. I think it had a profound effect on everyone even if they had a little money. But we were not only couldn't have caps and gowns which had been traditional for I don't know how many years at that time. But that was unthinkable. No one could really even talk about affording... although we did agree to have a school sweater which had also been traditional. I think my brother had...you had one 1924. Well, we had sweaters but they were very inexpensive. Well, as a matter of fact they cost \$3.50 or \$4.00 which was a terrible sum. My dad and our class decided that we would graduate in our school sweaters. There would be no expensive caps and gowns and things of that nature. Well, it was just unthinkable. We just didn't have it. It necessitated that everyone should have a sweater. Well, lots of people could not afford sweaters and I really think it was done by our class

president. Although it's possible that one of the home room teachers of a graduating class might have pushed this thing, I don't know. But we actually built a fund of own. Now this was just the graduating class built a fund of which if you couldn't afford a sweater you went to the president of the class.

DODSON: It's hard now for a person who didn't live through that to understand how bad it really was. I can say that my mother had investments in a number of savings and loans and I think every one of them, if they didn't fail, they either cut way down on her investments so that she got only a part of it out it. As I say, it's hard for a person now to realize how bad it was.

MAUDE: Personally I lived...that's about the time that I went back to work, or went to work. I was trying to remember...it seemed to me it lasted quite a few years. My husband lost his job. He had worked for the city in the Engineering Department and about that time, just before '29, the airplane taxes began and it's ? Burbank.

CATHY: Lockheed?

MAUDE: Yes, I think it was Lockheed. It was a different company. But it had just started and he went to work there.

HALVERSON: There was an old company named Kenner which made nothing but airplane motors ?

MAUDE: We thought it would be a marvelous opportunity. Much more lucrative than to work for the city and so he went to work over there and it had only been a few months after that it folded. So then we had nothing and we lost our home and about that time then I did get a job. I worked for a little while for the Bank of America, it had just had a little tiny office on Van Nuys Blvd. ? and I worked there for two weeks and on ? vacation. ? vacation and then I got a job at the Gas Company. The Southern California Gas Company. So that was part of the reason that I was ? most of the time.

DODSON: Do you think the people in the valley when Mr. Roosevelt was elected then that things were going to be better? Do you recall how you felt about that?

MAUDE: Let me see. I just don't know. I believe we did. Seems to me we use to sing "Happy Days are here again..."

DODSON: That was his big song then.

MAUDE: I think perhaps whether it was just because it was a stirring song and fun to sing, we felt better about it and we thought things were going to be better. I believe that we...

END OF TAPE #1

Interview with Lindsey R. Halverson and

Maude Halverson Clodfelter

Conducted by Dr. James L. Dodson

and Miss Catherine Ann McNeil

Interview conducted May 25, 1977

TAPE 2

MAUDE: I had one desk that was suitable to work in and one of the woman who had the _____ warehouse ... on the ... they give me five dollars to buy a dress and I said ...

CLODFELTER: We took this, I know ... I know ... without ... and I said, well as soon as I am paid I'll give you back ... pay due dates and so they pass it on to ...

HALVERSON: Um hum. That was the kind of thing that the profession did. There was nothing unusual for people to help each other because we were really -- we were in desperate straits and I said leave a whole dollar ... our family and my folks lost their homes which was a nice, big two-story house here in the Valley. You folks lost your home. It was a common occurrence. That was nothing unusual. This was the average of what was happening.

McNEIL: I asked you about apple sellers like people selling apples on the corner. The reason why this fascinates me is because apples do tend to be a part of the Valley, and oranges and peaches and things like that; do people do things like that? Do people do that also?

HALVERSON: Well, no, I think you hit upon it without realizing is that the very reason that an apple was something we didn't grow here so it was a treat and if you could just buy one for a nickel on the street corner you would do it almost like you would now step into a store and buy a candy bar.

DODSON: Wasn't it subsidized in some way by the NRA or whatever it was?

HALVERSON: I don't think apple selling -- to my knowledge, apple selling was really a self-enterprise thing where a fella scraped enough dollars together to buy a box of apples and then went and sold them at a profit, one at a time. Of course, there was a lot of -- we had programs, not NRA which was the National Relief Authority, I believe.

CLODFELTER: National Recovery ...

HALVERSON: ... that's right.

CLODFELTER: And then the agricultural one which was the AAA, Agricultural Adjustment Administration, I believe.

HALVERSON: And then the WPA, the CCC. We all know people that were in one way or another helped and affected by these social programs which came quite slowly. You didn't just wake up one day in '32 and say, "hey, we've got a depression; let's have a WPA." These social helps really were spread out pretty well over from '32 until '38, I think. There were different programs started, including the CCC camps, the Citizens Conservation Corps., and I had several friends who went to that. Most of them from necessity. Their parents could not afford to keep them at home and it was a way to make a few dollars and have room and board, and they sent the money home. Sterling Whitney sent the money to his parents, which was a nominal amount -- \$10 a month, perhaps, plus his room and board and all his clothing. Well, the money went home.

DODSON: Now, at the present time we feel we have a recession. Do you feel it compares in any way with the '29 one?

HALVERSON: Well, I'll speak first because I'm the closest, but I don't see any correlation at all. I mean, I don't think we even -- there is no way that it is even like that. We might have a little recession, why the stock market is down today. I hear it is the lowest point in a couple of years -- almost down to 900, while that wouldn't even scratch the surface of 1932 to 1938, I don't think.

MCNEIL: You mentioned that the savings and loans collapsed and the banks closed and many people lost all of their money. We didn't have any money to lose, really, at that time that I recall. We had our salaries. We were working when the banks closed but any money in the bank would be ... wages that were, you know ... checks and then you replenished it every payday and very little in savings account or anything of that nature. But when everything collapsed, when the banks closed, by that time we had been in the depression for quite a while.

HALVERSON: That's correct.

CLODFELTER: Because we had ... not having a job. You never got quite to the point where you had any welfare. We did not have any welfare. There was no such thing as Social Security or welfare of any kind, but I ...

for unemployment insurance, nothing like that. But we did -- we had finally gotten so that we were working at small wages and we were very fortunate, but then the banks collapsed. Some people had money that they had and they invested it in stocks and different things and that was a tremendous time. However, we did not lose much money then. We ... on our feet. But other people were just really penniless.

HALVERSON: There had been affluence the day before. You know, some people had saved money prior to '29 and had money in the bank and were thrifty and so forth, and when the depression came, perhaps, let's use a school teacher who would be a good example. He didn't lose his job. His pay went down, but we was still working and he was well off, that is so far as being able to have his home and food and he had savings in the bank and then one morning he woke up and the banks closed and you were broke, other than the money in your pocket, and that was a tough blow to those who thought they had a little money. They had money in the bank and then all of a sudden, bang.

McNEIL: Let's now talk about the year World War I started in, what was the general feeling about the Valley then?

HALVERSON: Would you remember that at all?

CLODFELTER: World War I -- Lamar would remember, but he wasn't even in the Valley at that time. ... the armistice was it in 1917?

HALVERSON: We were here in 1917 and the armistice was 1918.

CLODFELTER: Well, of course, I do remember it but I was a high school student and younger then.

HALVERSON: You were just a girl in 1918.

CLODFELTER: That's right! The first world war, the part that I remember, was the fact that we were afraid for a while that something would happen -- I don't know, spies or something -- and in our little grammar school way we thought that we were going to be attacked or something. You just read enough about it and -- I was afraid to go into the basement, down to the basement of the grammar school, we were sure that something was hiding down in there. I do

remember that. I do remember the armistice, though, and ...

DODSON: Was there a big celebration here in the Valley that you remember at the time of the armistice?

CLODFELTER: I don't remember it especially. I just remember lots of excitement and noise. Probably if there was a celebration, I was not there. I think there was, but I just can't get it into chronological order in my mind.

HALVERSON: You see, we lived about a mile from the town up on Vose Street just off Van Nuys Boulevard which at that time was a way from town and I remember myself, and I was only three years plus, that I can remember we could hear the noise from Van Nuys easily up where we lived and, of course, on our little dirt street all the people who lived around were just jumping in the streets and congratulating and hollering and joy-riding their cars up and down the road, and the specific act that happened that makes ... to assure everyone that I remember this is that my brother drew a picture of the Kaiser's face on our garage door and then threw a pick at it and I would have too if I could have lifted it.

HALVERSON: I remember that incident very well and so does he, you know that was our brother, George. There is no doubt that I can remember that. All I remember is just this tremendous noise which was coming from a mile and a half or almost two miles, the middle of Van Nuys.

CLODFELTER: Perhaps, that's what I remember, too. We were just there, the whole neighborhood was in an uproar and the noise coming from ... and the firecrackers, I don't remember too much about it.

MCNEIL: What about World War II, then? About how it affected the Valley when it came along.

HALVERSON: By this time I had left Van Nuys.

CLODFELTER: You weren't living here.

HALVERSON: I was living in Los Angeles at that time.

CLODFELTER: 1941, I can remember that.

DODSON: Do you remember Pearl Harbor and how you reacted to it when you got the news?

CLODFELTER: I was ... that day. Do you want to talk about it?
Well, I'll tell what I remember about the day, it
was on a Sunday, wasn't it?

DODSON: Yes.

CLODFELTER: It was Sunday and my husband did not have to work.
He worked in a service station at the corner of Van
Nuys Boulevard and Hamlin, the Standard Station. I
was at church and I didn't know about it until I
went by the station after church and that's when I
heard about it and he was -- we could hardly believe
our ears. We really thought that somebody was
playing a big joke or something because it just
couldn't be possible for something this awful to
happen to us. That was on the day; that I remember.
Then, of course, we remember quite vividly the
blackouts that came later.

MCNEIL: What about the camouflaging of businesses.

HALVERSON: If I could say, I remember very well a very large
factory in Burbank and overnight it was camouflaged.
I had been amazed that they could have done that job
so well. Perhaps, it didn't happen in one day, but
it didn't take more than a couple of days, a
weekend, perhaps. It was something that just almost

seemed to happen without anybody doing it, it was just all colors of olive drab and browns and so forth, you see pants like that, all over. And I guess all defense factories were in fact impacted, as far as I know, because I specifically remember driving by Lockheed and thinking that it wasn't that was yesterday.

MCNEIL: Were the buildings, and were the grounds, painted also?

HALVERSON: No, the grounds, I couldn't tell you how much of the ground, but a great deal of the area surrounding a factory like Lockheed, for example, had poles up with wire stretched between it with camouflaged pieces of cloth hanging from it or over it, depending on what the application ... might see, the ground and grass. It was almost overnight.

CLODFELTER: I was still working at that time at The Gas Company. I remember the soldiers were stationed where the Telephone Company was. At that time The Gas Company was right there on Sylvan Street, the City Hall, The Gas Company, then there used to be the Telephone Company and -- suddenly there were trucks, soldiers, and everything -- to get organized to be shipped out.

McNEIL: Were they flying out of Lockheed then? The Burbank Airport?

CLODFELTER: Well, yes. I guess they did. I don't remember; they must have gone out of the Van Nuys Airport, too.

McNEIL: Do you remember where they went?

HALVERSON: I used to go out of Van Nuys Airport.

DODSON: See, I was married and had moved away from the Valley so my recollections of the beginning of World War II and Pearl Harbor was in Los Angeles, which is where I was at the time. Of course, the activity was all toward the international, what we now call International Airport, LA Airport.

McNEIL: As far as the war goes, I'm sure it increased the number of jobs in the Valley. Did you notice that more people were, more businesses were starting up and more people were being hired, that type of thing?

CLODFELTER: Let's see.

HALVERSON: Well, it would have been possible for practically anybody to get a job at that time. Many women had to work. It was almost unheard of during the depression. There weren't even enough jobs for men, much less women. In other words, a housewife would not have thought of going to work if her husband had a job, she would be satisfied. Well, that isn't quite right either. At any rate, women working in factories was almost unheard of and almost immediately every man that could work and every woman who wanted to work had a job and it happened very fast then, very fast.

DODSON: Do you recall what the attitude toward Japanese residents in the Valley was? Were the people hostile to them, in your opinion, or did they accept them as having nothing to do with the war?

CLODFELTER: I can remember my reaction. I didn't know too many Japanese people. However, there was one who worked at the grocery store. I felt as if it was a terrible thing to make him go somewhere, they put him in a camp, because he was such a nice person. I couldn't think he had anything to do with any subversion of any kind. I don't know that I can recall what the thoughts were of other people.

HALVERSON: Perhaps, because I was in Los Angeles by that time and maybe had more exposure, I know that our feelings were very much as you describe them. The Japanese people that we knew, we had gone to school with, Katsu Yukogami, and so forth, were friends of ours and people we had trusted the same as anyone else, but when this happened because the Japanese attacked us the feeling in the factory that I worked in and the people I was in contact with and my own feeling was that it was unfortunate but it has to be. That is, that they go to Mansonart. In other words, our feeling was one of regret that it must be that way, but at that time I don't think anyone questioned that what it was the thing to do because remember we were attacked by the Japanese and all of a sudden we didn't know where we were at. One of the quickest ways to eliminate subversion, if there was, was to immediately round up the Japanese and put them in camps. As I say, we felt a regret, but a necessity for it. That was my feeling and most everyone I can think of felt that same way.

DODSON: That's pretty much in line with what other people in the Valley have told us. They have given us to understand that there was no hostility toward the Japanese living here as individuals.

HALVERSON: They were such industrious, hard working people that. Remember all of us had Japanese in our class, and I did too.

CLODFELTER: I didn't have any of them in my class, but I knew of them.

HALVERSON: Well, I remember them well. The Sago family, I think, and so forth. But at any rate, they were all hard working, industrious, seemed hard working and well liked people. It was definitely a regret, but no doubt in our minds that this was a necessity or our government would not have done it. That was our and my feeling.

DODSON: Did the rationing bother you during the war? Did you feel the scarcity of things?

CLODFELTER: Yes, yes I did. I don't think we really suffered but we coped similarly the way we cope now with the shortage of water. As soon as you are aware of it, then you feel you do as much as you can to make it work. I don't remember ever really going hungry for anything. We always had some kind of meat. By that time we had three children; I remember that I got sugar rationing and of course at that time when I was also doing my own canning, we got extra sugar

for canning purposes. I was ... advantage and of course we lived in ... at that time and had chickens and eggs and vegetables ... but the meat rationing was a little bit hard. We didn't have, perhaps, chicken ... my father ... and he took care of the chickens when they were available, so we didn't suffer as much. That's one shortage ... now, that's a different thing. That's what made life a little difficult. I bought a bicycle, I remember I bought a bicycle. It's interesting to realize that sometime I thought I had to buy the bicycle ... this was later on, surely. Because then I started back to work.

MCNEIL: Was the Red Car still there, or was the Red Car gone?

HALVERSON: Yes, I can answer that. The Red Cars were definitely there throughout the war. It wasn't until the 1950s that the Red Cars were taken off.

CLODFELTER: I used to take the Red Cars to go back and forth to work ...

HALVERSON: You would feel the rationing just resulted in your having to be careful like you do with the water now,

but there was no suffering or real want on account of this.

CLODFELTER: I believe that, that was ...

HALVERSON: I think so, too. I agree. It was adequate. In other words, we didn't really suffer, although we had to change our habits, just like the do now for water and are already doing. We had to do with meat far less, butter was rationed and all fats and oils were rationed, so you learned how to cook without a lot of fat. Soap was hard to get.

CLODFELTER: ... you can't do without soap because if you didn't have enough to do the laundry if you were not careful.

HALVERSON: That's right, and gasoline was probably the toughest one of all because there was not much alternative to gasoline, other than the Red Cars which were there, but unless they were going where you were going why that wouldn't help too much. ... the streetcar tracks you couldn't hardly of walked.

CLODFELTER: No, that's right.

HALVERSON: There wasn't an alternative ... every now and then you'd just buckle down and did the same thing, they made the best of what they had and with what you've got and ... certainly curtails driving for fun, taking trips, I mean, you just didn't do it.

DODSON: Do you remember when the river was going through the Valley, along the base of the mountain? Would you tell us about that, the things you use to do or what it was like down at the river?

HALVERSON: You're asking about the Los Angeles River, Cathy?

DODSON: Yes, uh huh.

HALVERSON: Which isn't much of a river now.

CLODFELTER: It was a nice little river. I don't, never boated at the river, the boys I'm sure did. But I do remember that it was a pretty river, trees and [sandy beaches?] -- no, no sandy beaches, it was always sort of down in a gully and it was made probably mostly from flood waters, but there was some clear water running as I recall all year round.

DODSON: Was there any swimming in it?

HALVERSON: Of, definitely. There was swimming. Not large [holes] swimming because it was a small stream, but it certainly did run all the year long and us boys spent lots of time there; we used to drink the water so we know that it wasn't a muddy little thing. However, the banks were grass grown and/or mud and dirt. Very little, if any, sand. It was eroded so deep that it was down into the core of the Valley but in places it would form a pier just naturally we swam many times. One of our favorites, the bus let us off at Coldwater Canyon and the L. A. River, and as Maude indicated the trees grew together at the top and it was always clear and peaceful down there, you know, and if you weren't swimming -- actually, the smaller boys, we mostly went down there to hunt for turtles and frogs and that type of thing. There was fish there, not big ones and not many, but we would just fish and look for turtles and there was live quail just the things that boys would do around that type of setting, it was a very, very beautiful place.

MCNEIL: What is a night spot, like a teenage hangout at night? Would you have bonfires down there or anything like that?

HALVERSON: Never at the river. No, there were no fires or anything of that type down there that I know of. Not at the river.

DODSON: At about what point did that river dry up and take on its present appearance, would you say?

HALVERSON: Well, actually, to my knowledge, it never has dried up, but they just encased it in concrete in about 1938, if I remember right, or shortly after the 1938 death. That's pretty much when.

MCNEIL: Tell us about Van Nuys and the flooding there.

HALVERSON: During the war? Well, as we talked about earlier Van Nuys, as long as I could remember, that is starting about 1919 until well past _____ into the late 30s at least, there were always floods down Van Nuys Boulevard and Tyrone Avenue, with Tyrone catching the most of it, and the overflow onto Van Nuys Boulevard. This would happen, this was an annual event. Whenever it rained more than I would say an inch and a half or two in one stretch, the merchants put up sandbags along Van Nuys Boulevard to protect their stores from water, yet often may not get clear into their stores, but if often would, too. So, it was a common thing to have sandbags

along Van Nuys Boulevard storefronts. On Tyrone Street in Van Nuys, starting at Kittridge clear past Calvert Street, there were permanent sandbags set up all Winter because of these floods that kept coming -- do you remember? Six feet high, that's right -- we used to play forts and everything else, or we had a marvelous time as children.

CLODFELTER: ... in between ... permanent laws.

HALVERSON: When it started to rain, the city would rush out a field man to close the gaps that were left at _____, fill them with sandbags and then you had to go to town, you had to go on the west side of Kittridge Avenue, I mean Tyrone Avenue, while the flood was happening or while it was imminent. You would have to go clear up to Valerio Street, not Sherman Way, you've got Hazeltine to Valerio and then across the bridge onto Van Nuys Boulevard and then down into town. That's the only way you could drive. Otherwise the _____ didn't have bridges across it. So a considerable part of Tyrone would be -- in fact, a great deal of the Winter time it might be closed to traffic the whole time and there were footbridges built, there's one at Kittridge Street then at Hamlin and one at Victory and these were so that people walk across

the wash when it was raining. When they closed the gaps, you couldn't drive car. Often, people would park on the east side of Tyrone and walk across the bridge and two blocks into Van Nuys and did their shopping and walked back rather than to drive clear up to Valerio Street or Sherman Way, whichever it was that had the bridge and then down.

DODSON: It's hard to picture now such an inclement system.

MCNEIL: The water didn't naturally go down Van Nuys Boulevard, did it?

HALVERSON: No, it didn't. The water that came down Van Nuys Boulevard and Tyrone Street in those years that I'm speaking of had originally came down, just about straight, that would be Kester Avenue or in the vicinity of Kester Avenue. In the early days, and this I didn't actually witness, but my father told me that a certain rancher either built it himself or hired people to change, to divert the wash, the natural wash bed, he bent it at just about Saticoy Street, bent it to go east and then across Van Nuys Boulevard at Valerio Street and then at a slight angle down to Vanowen where it then bumps right next to Tyrone Street, and that's how the water came, flooding Van Nuys. Now, this was done in the very

early days, before my time. I honestly didn't see this, but this was common knowledge that this had happened and if anybody would take a look at the natural wash they will see that it makes a great big S and ebbs down to Van Nuys. We've had floods from then on.

MCNEIL: You said that this was done around 1910.

HALVERSON: Later than 1910. Yes, our parents moved here in 1911 and the way my father spoke of it, it happened about '13 or '14, which was then we first moved to Vose Street. The wash ran right next to it, so we were very aware of it happening -- it affected us, where we lived, that is we began to have floods every Winter.

DODSON: Did you suffer much damage to your property as a result of these?

HALVERSON: Well, yes. Really, now that I look back, it never put us out of business, but you remember on Kittridge Street you had a beautiful lawn, shrubs and when the floods happened it would keep the main flow of the water in the sacks that we mentioned but there would always -- that's it, that's taken at that corner. And here my father has built boards,

this is on our front lawn, and we would get
_____ water and then when the water
receded we had as much as six inches of silt on our
_____ and under our house and this all
would have to be cleaned out. A crew of men would
have to come and clean up all that silt and wash
your lawn down and silt and maybe not cause
permanent damage but it cost some money.

CLODFELTER: ... flooded over the top of the ... I remember we
had a cellar ... the house was built high enough so
it didn't ever get into the house, but it did run
over our carpeting.

MCNEIL: Did the floods ruin the ... off of Van Nuys?

HALVERSON: Well, do you remember when they built that bridge,
the big viaduct under Van Nuys Boulevard, wasn't
that in late 30s? [Yes.] We had the WPA program,
perhaps. Almost the whole of Van Nuys Boulevard has
a big store drain under it and it's beautiful and
that immediately relieved Van Nuys Boulevard's
businesses. But it was ...

CHANGE TAPE SIDES

HALVERSON: ... fly over, but they landed and if I recall there was a _____ of the United States Army airplane team and the cars came by what seem to us now that this perhaps happened in 1923, '24 or '25, in that era, or perhaps even '22. I can't think of the exact year, but it took place west of Kester Street which would be partially in what's now almost Sepulveda, I'm sorry, west of Sepulveda which was almost Sepulveda Basin down, is where they had this. This squadron of Army planes came and then there were private planes and they did stunts and make smoke screens and then the private planes also took people to a ride for some sort of fee. We didn't take the ride so I don't know how much it cost. The highlight of that day was twofold. One is that everybody was there; I think in the whole San Fernando Valley, certainly the greater Van Nuys area. And I remember too I noted that _____ would have held a runway nowadays and one of the planes landed short of the freeway in a field just on top of _____ and injured them severely. The woman was injured for life, a back injury of some kind. These were neighbors of ours, so I remember it vividly because it had a profound effect on their family that one minute was having a wonderful time at this _____ and the

next this accident happened. I have no idea what financial repercussions there were; I'm sure ... I think it was an Army plane that did it. It took a while for the government to take care of them but I recall their son, a boy my age ... and after a while they got some relief from the government because it was a government plane that had done it.

[Question unclear]

HALVERSON: Yes. Yes, definitely. It was well planned in advance.

[Question unclear]

HALVERSON: It was some holiday, either Decoration Day or Memorial Day, one or the other. I don't think it was Fourth of July, but you might be interested to know that in those days, always on Armistice Day and the Fourth of July Van Nuys had a parade, and I mean that everybody was there. ... and, of course, the World War I people, this would be in the early 20s, all during the 20s and late teens, World War I veterans were young men then and a whole company of them would ... remember the fella that would always carry the flag, not Mackie _____, but _____, it was a big,

tall long blonde man, he lived on _____
and Van Nuys Boulevard, I mean _____
and Kittridge. It doesn't matter, but he was a bit,
burly, handsome man and he carried the flag so
erect. ... Walker, one of the Walker boys. Herbert
Walker, that's right.

CLODFELTER: ... Walker, he was my boss at the organ factory,
that's where I got my job was Herbert Walker, who
happened to be a neighbor. I did go to the office,
I remember, to ask for work and ... gave it to me,
that's when I resigned from the position I had in
Los Angeles that I hadn't had too long because I
didn't want to ride the streetcar any longer. He
really was a fabulous man.

HALVERSON: Yes, he was. He was a good citizen and a good man
and a good neighbor.

CLODFELTER: Yes, he was.

HALVERSON: And at that time we had a bandstand in Van Nuys and
always the Van Nuys band marched in this parade and
then they would end up at the bandstand with a
concert of patriotic music and some kind of
speakers, I don't remember the speakers. They never
sunk in, but everyone came; this would be a big

event on those holidays always, you could count on this happening.

McNEIL: Nobody has mentioned the Van Nuys band before. Was that a municipal band publicly paid or how was it arranged?

HALVERSON: As far as I know, and Maude may remember, I played in it at a time and so I talk about it. I think that the ... no, I haven't heard that name before.

CLODFELTER: ... he was very much interested in music and played in the band and ... he was concerned with other music ...

HALVERSON: He owned a music shop, a music store which was right in Van Nuys and he was a pillar of the community because in those days everybody took piano lessons or then when you went to school they would buy you an instrument and see that you played in the band, you know your parents did it, it was a big part of our community, so Mr. Norwold was the owner of that store. ... was the band leader and as far as I know the Van Nuys municipal band ... although I don't think it carried the word "municipal." I think that the Chamber of Commerce paid for it; it was not a

thing paid for out of taxes or anything like that. It was money ... arranged and their class was mainly ... buying of uniforms, which you remember had dark blue coats and light flannel pants and a hat. The Van Nuys band played at all kinds of functions but certainly on any patriotic occasion, Fourth of July, Armistice Day and Decoration Day, those three for sure. The Van Nuys band was always there.

DODSON: When was that band abolished?

HALVERSON: To my knowledge, probably World War II did it in. Although it was already suffering in the late 30s just from lack of interest. In other words, things that people came to of that type did not exist as often, plus our bandstand was burned down.

DODSON: Where was the bandstand located?

HALVERSON: The bandstand was originally at the corner of Friar Street and Van Nuys Boulevard on the northeast corner. About 1925 it was moved to the site of the lawn (??) of the Van Nuys City Hall in Sylmar.

DODSON: It was not a park at the time?

HALVERSON: Really not a park. It was just a field with a bandstand in the middle of it. When people came there was no seating. You could set up a band concert and so forth. Whenever the Van Nuys City Hall was built, and that had to be about '35 I think, they tore down, I say they would have torn down the bandstand, except that part of the initial celebration of the fact that they were going to have a Van Nuys City Hall consisted of a giant bonfire to which anyone in the Valley was invited. And I don't know if the Chamber of Commerce or who did it but they put up four telephone poles that were perhaps 20 feet apart (do you remember those?) and they ... and then everyone got anything that would burn, principally wood, slats, hunks of logs, boxes, anything that would burn, and these were big telephone poles, they were as high as any of the big telephone poles that you see on the street, and when they were going to have this ground breaking ceremony, and the bandstand was still standing and all the dignitaries were there and they lit this bonfire, it was much larger than they thought and pretty soon the people had to get out of the bandstand and the crowd moved back and all of a sudden the bandstand just burst into flames. It just reached that point. The Fire Department was right across the street and they already had hoses

out but they couldn't save the thing, the fire was just immense. You can't believe the size ...

HALVERSON: We sure did. I recently talked to a friend who was a fireman at that time, Bob Smith was his name, he is retired from the L. A. fire Department and he remembers it. He was the one who brought it back to my memory. He said, you couldn't get close enough to squirt it. Imagine the pile of stuff as high as a telephone pole and set it on fire. You could ... across the street from the Fire Department when people would bring junk and the pile got so high you couldn't reach it, they used to put a hook and ladder up there and throw it in. You know, this was... you could set the whole town on fire. But it did no more damage than burn that down which was going to be destroyed anyway or burn the City Hall, so there was no loss. Then the band itself went out of existence...I think the fact that I don't know what happened to Mr. Norwold but I believe he being the main person probably in the Chamber of Commerce who helped the band, number one, _____ or something and finally ? the Van Nuys High School band teacher was the band master and when he got old and moved away that almost did it in because it was on the strength of these people that they had a band. You know? They were the glue that held it

together...disintegrated. But this ? Fiscus? was quite a man and he just loved band music, too. And he got paid, obviously to teach it at high school. But he got _____ the Van Nuys Band -- Municipal Band they called it. They didn't know he used to go to Canoga Park and I say teach night school but he did this on his own. And he invited everybody who liked to play an instrument from the Canoga Park High School and every Wednesday night and they'd just play. You know -- what do you like to play and we'll play it. And it would be adults and all the band members from the Van Nuys High School band who had a car or a way to get there, plus all the Canoga Park people. Plus I'll never forget one of the -- base horn and one of the base players had joined the Marine Corps, he's older than I am, he'd joined the Marine Corps after he got out of high school and he was home on leave and _____. Yeah he was there. And we all thought of this guy almost like a father. I mean he was a tremendous influence on our lives because he loved music, you know. He had strength and he knew how to teach music and he just inspired everybody to play for him. You couldn't be associated with him without being inspired to like music and to have a respect for it, as well as the man. You know, he demanded respect.

DODSON: Well, I sort of have a sentimental feeling for these bands because my home town is Colorado Springs, Colorado and we had a municipal band that was a social get-together. When the band gave its public concerts the people in the town would come down and it was a very pleasant sort of thing. I feel that we have really lost something by the loss of those bands. Of course, I imagine that the coming in of so much radio and television and all that has been a factor which tended to destroy them. One thing I wanted to ask you about was minority problems in the valley, whether there ever was anything like that since we're hearing so much about minorities now. In the past was anything like that common?

MAUDE: I don't think that there were many people and I don't recall there being very much in the newspapers or anything. But from my viewpoint the minorities were someone to help and to be _____ to and to try to improve them in whatever was going on. And in ? I remember there was only one negro and he was really a sort of a hero. Everyone liked him. He was _____ as nearly as I can remember. There was the people who were, who now live in this section on the west side of Van Nuys or what's called now Mexican Town. I don't know if they called it that. But that was when I was older. I

don't think that they were looked down on. They probably were not able to find good jobs because they didn't have the education and undoubtedly life was hard for them but I personally didn't have very much connection with them, so I -- I don't recall anything major, being a major problem.

DODSON: Then there must not have been then because you would have known about it, and what you're telling us is about in line with what everybody else has told us, that there was no real minority problem or tension of any kind. How would you feel about busing at the present time if you had children in that age range?

MAUDE: I have mixed feelings about it which I imagine most parents do. I think I would want them to have -- I think it would be good for them to be integrated to a certain extent. I would worry about them being on the bus for long periods of time. Number one, they would lose their feeling of the neighborhood and I'm a great one for neighborhoods and close friends with people that you mirror, and it would eliminate any after school get-togethers. However, I do think that it's good for the children at least perhaps a partial integration where they have certain numbers of days or weeks _____ at the other schools and then more at their own schools because I don't think

you can integrate people by making them go here and go there if they don't want to be integrated. I am not against integration. I think integration is good. Our neighborhood where we live now are integrated very much. There are people of all different kinds live in my -- our little tract where we live. And everybody gets along beautifully.

DODSON: We were talking about integration. One thing that I wanted to ask you about, one or two people have mentioned to me that there was a certain amount of Ku Klux Klan activity at one time in the valley. Do you know anything about that?

MAUDE: No. I do remember one incident. I can't understand why I wasn't really concerned about it but I had to go to a Ku Klux Klan meeting with a young man. I think that I was upset about it but to me it just seemed like a bunch of foolishness. You know, there were other groups of people, like the Oddfellows and the Masons and that who had their group meetings and to me it just seemed like this group was acting sort of juvenile with their hoods and all. And it would be something that I didn't want to be a part of. So I was only there a few minutes and that was it. And I don't remember very much about it because I'm sure

that I would never have gone to another one and I didn't really know very much about their activities.

DODSON: There must not have been any strong movement at that time in the valley then or you would have known more about it.

MAUDE: I don't remember any. Do you think that was before you were here? One of them went out with us two or three times and I can't even think of his name right at the moment but surely it was off limits as far as my family was concerned. They would have been very upset if they would have known I was at this kind of a meeting. I'm sure I never talked about it and really hadn't even thought about it for I don't know how many years.

MCNEIL: Was there a great number of people there who were interested in it? I was just wondering how widespread it was.

MAUDE: I don't think it was very widespread. I really don't. As I recall, maybe 50 to 75 people would have been there. I can't even remember where it was. It was outdoors. That's about as much as I can remember about it.

DODSON: Was the movement directed against the negroes and Catholics and Jews to your knowledge?

MAUDE: I don't really know. I don't know.

DODSON: There wouldn't have been a very large Jewish settlement in the valley at that time, would there?

MAUDE: I don't know. There were Jewish people in the valley from the time of grammar school but I don't know that there were big groups of them. I don't remember much about it. Do you remember anything at all about the Ku Klux Klan?

DODSON: Only as a small child there was a big fire up in the hills and that was supposedly Ku Klux Klan. As a boy it didn't really mean a thing. I didn't really quite understand what was happening and I also heard of some cross being burned somewhere. But it was some remote thing that some bunch of nuts did, or at least that was the feeling in our community. I don't -- you know, "some creeps or screwballs built a cross in somebody's lawn or something". I mean that was the attitude. There were a few Jewish people, I heard you mention Jewish people, here. One being Morris Lipson -- Dr. Morris Lipson who may

be practicing ~~here~~ in Van Nuys if he hasn't retired -- that's right.

MAUDE: _____ there was no discrimination.

CLODFELTER: I didn't realize they were Jews at that time. You know, I mean there was no discrimination. I never even considered Morris Lipson a Jew until I was grown up and, you know, I guess Morris' Jewish. The same with the Greenbergs and the Horowitz family, just part of our community.

DODSON: One reason that I'm asking is that one of the former students of mine who is Jewish is writing a paper on early Jewish settlement in the valley and she asked me about this sort of thing. Well, I didn't know anything about it and nobody had mentioned it to me. So now I've been asking people about it to see if I could get some information for her.

MAUDE: Did you find anyone who does recall whether the Ku Klux Klan...?

DODSON: Some people have told me they can't remember there was ever any Ku Klux Klan activity in the valley and others have said they think there was a Ku Klux Klan

group but it was never of any importance in the valley.

MAUDE: I think that's what I would feel that I would not remember it at all except for this one incident when a young man that I was with maybe 2 or 3 times at the very most, took me to a meeting which I knew I shouldn't be there and I never talked about it. And at that time I didn't of it as being very important I just knew that it would not be the kind of place where I should be, that I shouldn't be there and that I should have nothing to do with it.

DODSON: You mentioned the name of several Jewish families in the valley. She would be very much interested in knowing about those. You say there was one family named Lipson?

CLODFELTER: Lipson L-I-P-S-O-N, Dr. Morris Lipson. He is probably still practicing right here in Van Nuys in internal medicine. A specialist and a good one.

DODSON: Do you know of any other early Jewish families. She might be very grateful.

MAUDE: The Greenberg family must have come to Van Nuys almost as soon as we did.

DODSON: Yes, I think she knows about them.

MAUDE: Yes she does. I would think perhaps they would be a good place for her to get information because of course they...

MCNEIL: ...and she knows them.

DODSON: He was an airport commissioner, wasn't he?

MAUDE: Yes, yes an airport commissioner.

DODSON: I think you mentioned another name, Horowitz?

MAUDE: _____ Horowitz.

CLODFELTER: The reason I mentioned Horowitz, I think Mr. Horowitz and Mr. Greenberg were brothers-in-law because they owned the Van Nuys Theatre, the old Liberty Theatre and then when they opened the Van Nuys Theatre Mr. Horowitz ran that and neither one of his children -- anyway, I was aware they were brothers-in-law and Mrs. Horowitz and Mrs. Greenberg were sisters I believe. And one ran one theatre and one, the other.

MAUDE: _____ I don't remember whether there was a second one or _____.

CLODFELTER: Those are the only Jewish people I remember as such and there were probably others. But as I say, Jewish was not a big thing. I mean, you could be one or not be one, it's up to you.

DODSON: So this valley seems to have been pretty free of prejudice against the Mexican-Americans or the Jews or the blacks, or any group.

CLODFELTER: It must have been what Maude had said about the one black student when you went to high school and there was one when I went to high school, you know, 8/9 years later and he was a hero. He was looked up to because he was different and everybody, you know. He was a different color. Let's face it - the only black man in school. But people went out of their way to make sure that no one would ever say they treated him badly. He was looked up to and was considered -- you had to be a friend of his to be anybody. I mean, you know, you wanted him for a friend.

MCNEIL: Did he ever go out with any of the white girls in school?

CLODFELTER: I don't think so. I don't think that it was ever considered that he might. I don't ever remember anybody ever saying either pro or con. I think you just took it for granted that blacks go with blacks and whites go with whites and I don't think any thought was ever given to, as far as I know, girls in our class and I never remember anyone even talking about it pro or con, either one.

MCNEIL: Was the feeling that if someone did, you know, say like if a girl did go out with him would it -- did you think that it would be a serious thing, that people would be offended by it?

CLODFELTER: I don't know - I would probably agree I think the whole town would have been offended by it. I think in those days we thought black is black and white is white and never the twain shall meet. I would think we would have definitely been offended.

MAUDE: I think that it was that way. I don't think that we felt that we were better than they, we were different than they were.

CLODFELTER: Different is the word.

MAUDE: And at that time people merely stayed within their own small groups and I'm afraid that's the way we thought, really.

CLODFELTER: Yeah, the same with Catholics and Protestants. You know, they were Catholics and they were Protestants. You know, they were different...

MAUDE: ...had their ? among classes. Not that you thought that they were better but they knew people because you were the same and had the same interests, common interests.

DODSON: Do you know the names of any other valley residents who lived here a long time that you think we might interview possibly?

CLODFELTER: Well I mentioned Dr. Morris Lipson and I would certainly -- he was educated here and I think lived here all his life. And of course the Greenbergs, Sam Greenberg.

DODSON: Sam we have interviewed. But beyond that Maude, we were talking about the Petits and the...

CLODFELTER: We know the Petits...

MAUDE: ...and Mrs. Petit is _____. And the Beavis family and the LeMays.

DODSON: Mrs. Beavis is still alive, isn't she. Mr. Beavis is dead isn't that right?

MAUDE: As far as...I'm talking about Mrs. Harry Beavis. She might be alive. But I was talking about...

DODSON: The one in the real estate business?

MAUDE: They were both in the real estate business. _____ I can't remember, he is dead. _____ and what about the Malet family.

CLODFELTER: The Malets are old-timers and I'm sure there's some of them here.

DODSON: That name we didn't know before. We didn't know LeMay either so we'll be glad to know these.

CLODFELTER: And LeMay Street was named after them and Beavis Street was named after the Beavis'.

DODSON: Are any members of the LeMay family still around?

MAUDE: No, no.

CLODFELTER: I don't think there are.

MAUDE: No that would be the only two that I knew the mother and father and they have been dead now quite a few years.

CLODFELTER: The Beavis family being relatives of theirs. What about the Gilia family G-I-L-I-A. Frank Gilia. _____ the home used to be right on the point. That big 2-story ranch house and I don't know what happened to them in later years, but...

DODSON: Well, thank you very much Mr. Halverson and Mrs. Clodfelter. You have been listening to an interview with Mr. Lindsey R. Halverson and his sister, Mrs. Maude Halverson Clodfelter. The interview was conducted by Dr. James L. Dodson, Curator of the Los Angeles Valley College Historical Museum and by Miss Catherine Ann McNeil, Museum Aide. The date is May 25, 1977.

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